



Meeting Notes

Project: Raleigh Senior Centers

Public Input Meeting

Date and time of meeting: August 26, 2008, 3:00 PM

Location: Hayes Barton United Methodist Church

Panel Members:

Stephen Bentley, City of Raleigh Department of Parks & Recreation

Steve White, City of Raleigh Department of Parks & Recreation

Chris Horner, HH Architecture

Kristen Hess, HH Architecture

Douglas Gallow, Lifespan Design Studio

Ellen Gallow, Lifespan Design Studio

The following is a summary of notes taken by members of the design team in attendance at the public input meeting. It is not intended as a comprehensive record of the event.

1. Question from the audience: Will you tear down the existing Whitaker Mill Center?
 - a. Response: No
2. Questions/responses from the audience when asked what new programs they would like to see accommodated in the new facilities:
 - a. Question: Will either of the new facilities include a pool?
 - i. Response from panel: No, it is not feasible within the budget for this project, but the Department of Parks & Recreation's next phase of aquatics facility development may include a warm water pool.
 - b. Comment from audience: A crafts room would be a better investment than a billiards room which requires too much space for too few people's enjoyment. Billiards can be played elsewhere.
 - i. Response from audience: offering billiards is a good means of attracting and serving men.
 - c. Question from audience: Will you work with SeniorNet to offer computer classes?
 - i. Response from panel: Possibly, we are looking into this. There will almost definitely be computer instruction offered at Whitaker Mill.
 - d. Comment from audience: Include a sewing room with a layout table.

- e. Comment from audience: Provide watercolor painting classes in a room with a sink.
 - f. Comment from audience: Offer theatre/acting classes.
 - g. Comment from audience: Offer movie viewing/discussion program.
 - h. Comment from audience: Need a large dance floor
 - i. Comment from audience: Need men's programs such as
 - i. Golf league
 - ii. Men's breakfast club
 - iii. Men's card groups (especially pincochle)
 - iv. Fishing club
 - j. Comment from audience: Offer art history classes, form relationships with museums
 - k. Comment from audience: Create a choral group – provide appropriate meeting space
 - l. Comment from audience: Move programs from existing center at Whitaker Mill into new facility, and respect financial issues
 - i. Some can't afford expensive coffee from a "café"
 - ii. Some programs must be free of charge
 - iii. Move the food distribution program – provide room with sink and storage
 - m. Comment from audience: Provide a nutrition education program
3. Questions/comments from the audience regarding un-programmed uses of both facilities:
- a. Comment from audience: Centers should have a lounge where people can drop in for cards
 - b. Comment from audience: Provide a place to display seniors' artwork
 - c. Comment from audience: More bathrooms needed
 - d. Comment from audience: Want to be able to drop in to use computers
 - e. Comment from audience: Allow drop-in use of exercise equipment and ping pong tables
4. Questions/comments from the audience regarding shortcomings of current facilities:

- a. Comment from audience: Sound systems are inadequate
 - b. Comment from audience: Temperature control is a problem and facilities are often too hot or too cold
 - c. Comment from audience: Need more rest rooms
 - d. Comment from audience: Need more separate spaces to support different kinds of activities
 - e. Comment from audience: Parking is a problem – especially at Millbrook Exchange
 - f. Comment from audience: Centers are not on bus lines
 - i. Response from panel: Yes they are
 - ii. Response from audience: Front-door drop off is needed
5. Comments/questions from the audience pertaining to the placement of the new center at Millbrook Exchange Park
- a. Comment from audience: Front door drop off (covered) is critical! Consider the needs of handicapped participants (accessibility issues)
 - b. Comment from audience: Doors currently swing into the room (safety concern)
 - i. Response from panel: This will not occur in the new building
 - c. Comment from audience: The new building should be connected to the community center so that seniors programs can continue to make use of space in the community center when needed.
 - d. Comment from audience: The buildings should be separate – senior center should have a covered drop off and its own parking.
6. Comments/questions from the audience pertaining to outdoor amenities at both facilities:
- a. Interest was expressed in:
 - i. Volleyball
 - ii. Basketball
 - iii. Badminton
 - iv. Horseshoes
 - v. Shuffleboard
 - vi. Grill area

vii. Croquet

viii. Walking trail

7. General comments and questions from the audience:

- a. Comment from audience: Lighting and safety are concerns, especially at Millbrook Exchange
- b. Question from audience: Does the City have a purchase agreement for the land at Whitaker Mill?
 - i. Response from panel: Not yet. Decisions need to be made regarding the placement of the building on the lot before an agreement can be reached for the lease or purchase of the property from the County.
- c. Comment from audience: There should be a walkway connection between the two buildings at Whitaker Mill.
- d. Comment from the audience: The design of the new facility at Whitaker Mill must be respectful of and harmonious with the design of the existing building.
- e. Question from the audience: How will the opinions/information being gathered by the City and design team be weighed to make decisions.
 - i. Response from panel: There is no formula for assigning weight to input. All input will be taken seriously and taken into consideration.
- f. Comment from audience: The building should be "green."
 - i. Response from panel: the building will be LEED silver or higher
- g. Question from audience: Will there be an elevator at Whitaker Mill?
 - i. Response from panel: Yes, if more than one story an elevator will be required.
- h. Question from audience: How will staff be funded?
 - i. Response from panel: Through the City's Parks & Recreation budget, unless the individual is employed by a partner agency.
- i. Question from audience: Has/will the design team visited other senior centers in the area?
 - i. Response from panel: City staff have already visited several, and the design team intends to make visits as the design process continues.

This document is a summary of the meeting as recorded by Lifespan Design Studio. Should any corrections or additions be required, please contact this office in writing within seven days of receipt.

September 9, 2008